UNION OF THE NORTH AMERICAN COLONIES.

NOVA SCOTIA.

At a Council held at the Government House, at Halifax, on the 16th day of June, 1857.

PRESENT:

His Excellency Sir J. Gaspard LeMarchant, Lieutenant-Governor,
The Honorable James W. Johnston,
" Charles Tupper,
" Michael Tobin,
" Martin I. Wilkins,
" Stayley Brown,
" John J. Marshall,
" John Campbell, (Councillors.)

The Honorable James W. Johnston, Attorney General, and Adams G. Archibald, Esq., the Commissioners appointed for the purpose of effecting a settlement of the questions relating to the Mines and Minerals of the Province, are hereby authorized and requested, whilst in England, to solicit, on behalf of this Colony, from Her Majesty's Government, the reconsideration of the question of the construction of an Inter-Colonial Railroad between Halifax and Quebec, by the combined agency of the Imperial Government and the Provinces of Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia.

They are also authorized, either in connection with that question, or otherwise, to confer with the Imperial Government, or any other parties interested therein, on the subjects of Immigration to this Colony, and a Union of the British North American Provinces.

Extract of a Despatch, No. 41, *dated* 16*th June*, 1857, *from the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, to the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for the Colonies:*

"Deeply impressed with the importance of inter-communication by Railroad between the Colonies of Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, both to the Imperial Government and these Colonies, as calculated to draw more closely the bonds of union between the latter and the Parent State, and to afford security to the Colonial Possessions in the event of war,—my Government have instructed the Delegates to solicit Imperial coöperation in the construction of the road in question, convinced that its accomplishment is alike demanded for the advancement of the Colonies, and for the interests of the Empire.

"In connection with this subject, the Delegates are also instructed to confer with Her Majesty's Government on the importance of establishing a judicious system of Immigration into the Colonies, and to bring under its serious consideration the subject of a Union of the British North American Provinces, as tending to their elevation and perpetuating their connection with the Parent Kingdom."

(COPY.)

Halifax, 6th November, 1857.

SIR,—

We have the honor to report for the information of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, that, in pursuance of the instructions we had received from the Provincial Government, we brought the subject of the Union of the North American Colonies under the notice of the Colonial Secretary, during our recent mission to London.

In our interview which we had with Mr. Labouchere, this question was freely discussed. He informed us that Her Majesty's Government had no desire to interfere with the determination to which the Colonies themselves might come on a point so immediately affecting their own interests; and that if they should be of opinion that Union would advance their prosperity, the Government would oppose no obstacle to the accomplishment of their wishes. Mr. Labouchere's own opinion we learnt to be, that while he doubted whether the Union of Canada and the Lower Provinces might not embrace too wide a circle for convenience and efficiency, he believed that the Union of the Lower Provinces would be highly beneficial, and tend greatly to improve their position, and assist their progress. This declaration of the freedom of the Colonies to decide this important question for themselves, seemed to be all that could be desired from the Government, while, as yet, neither the Legislature nor the People of Nova Scotia had given an expression of opinion on the subject, and when we had no authority to answer the enquiry of the Colonial Secretary, whether the people of Nova Scotia desired the change.

We therefore considered that the question had been brought to a point at which the next step must be taken by the Colonies; and that nothing more remained to be at present pressed on the consideration of the Imperial Government.

We have the honor to be

Your most obedient Servants,

(Signed) J. W. JOHNSTON.
ADAMS G. ARCHIBALD.

To the Honorable the Provincial Secretary.